



Department of Justice

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Southern District of Indiana**

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HOGSETT WARNS CRIMINALS OF AGGRESSIVE FEDERAL FOCUS ON DRUG AND GUN-RELATED CRIME

PRESS RELEASE

INDIANAPOLIS - United States Attorney Joseph H. Hogsett today warned those who traffic in illegal narcotics and guns that he has instructed his staff to attain “historic levels of aggressiveness” in prosecuting violent crime. “Violent crime is our priority. We will diminish its effects. We will pursue it wherever it raises its ugly head. We will do everything within our power to protect neighborhoods and Hoosier communities.”

Hogsett further commented, “I have grown weary of hearing people talk about guns and drugs. The time for talking about the problem is over. We in the United States Attorney’s Office are going to re-double our efforts, roll up our sleeves, and start the process of making positive change,” said Hogsett.

As evidence of this heightened commitment, Hogsett announced that Alberto Santana-Cabrera, 31, was sentenced this week to 900 months (75 years) in prison by U.S. District Judge William T. Lawrence following his convictions for conspiracy to distribute 50 grams or more of methamphetamine, distribution of methamphetamine and three counts of possession of a firearm in furtherance of a drug trafficking crime.

The evidence at trial established that Santana-Cabrera, who at the time of his arrest was on probation for a prior drug conviction, was illegally selling firearms along with methamphetamine out of the garage behind his house located on Division Avenue in Indianapolis. This investigation led to law enforcement seizing over 600 grams of methamphetamine, seven firearms, and \$53,000 in United States currency.

U.S. Attorney Hogsett stated, “We will identify, investigate, and prosecute career offenders who distribute narcotics and use firearms. This defendant, a convicted felon, made a choice to sell guns and meth while armed with another gun. The consequence of those choices is that he will spend 75 years in a federal prison. I commend the Drug Enforcement Administration and IMPD Metro Drug Task Force for working together to bring Mr. Santana-Cabrera to justice.”

According to Assistant U.S. Attorney Josh J. Minkler, who prosecuted the case for the government, Judge Lawrence also imposed 10 years supervised release following Santana-Cabrera's release from prison. This case was the result of an investigation by the Drug Enforcement Administration and the Indianapolis Police Department Metropolitan Drug Task Force.

Hogsett also announced that in separate proceedings on Thursday and Friday, February 17 and 18, Judge Lawrence sentenced Manuel Perez, 36, Honduras, and Eduardo Ramirez, 34, Mexico, to 10 years in prison and 15 years in prison respectively, following their pleas of guilty to interfering with interstate commerce by robbery and using a firearm during the commission of a crime of violence.

In proceedings late last year, both Ramirez and Perez pled guilty to their involvement in the robberies. Ramirez admitted he was involved in four of the five robberies, and Perez admitted he had driven the crew to and from all five robberies. Ramirez, who is unlawfully present in the United States, will likely be deported following the service of his prison sentence. Perez, a lawful permanent resident of the United States, also faces likely removal from the United States following the service of his prison term. Both will be required to serve at least 85% of the imposed term of imprisonment. Valdez and Rivera have cases pending disposition.

Between January 27, 2009, and March 24, 2009, a series of armed robberies occurred in the central Indiana area. Specifically a bakery, three Hispanic grocery stores, and a Mexican restaurant were robbed by a group of Hispanic males. The businesses were located in Frankfort, Noblesville, Westfield, and Indianapolis. On March 24, 2009, Manuel Perez and German Rivera were taken into custody after they participated in the robbery of the La Pasadita Mexican restaurant in Frankfort, Indiana. A loaded Taurus, 9mm pistol was recovered from the vehicle being driven by Perez. On or about March 28, 2009, Eduardo Ramirez and Juan Valdez were separately taken into custody for their involvement in the armed robberies. Ramirez was arrested during a traffic stop by IMPD, and a Hipoint, model C, 9mm pistol was recovered from his vehicle.

According to Assistant U.S. Attorney Matthew J. Rinka, who prosecuted the case for the government, Judge Lawrence also imposed five year terms of supervised release on Perez and Ramirez, which will follow their release from prison. Perez and Ramirez were also ordered to pay \$1,750 in restitution to the businesses and employees they robbed. This case was the result of a year long investigation by the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives, Boone County Sheriff's Department, Clinton County Sheriff's Department, Westfield Police Department, Noblesville Police Department, and the Indianapolis Metropolitan Police Department.

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